

THE SCIENCE OF COINS.

RELATION OF NUMISMATICS TO HISTORY AND EDUCATION.

Noted Coin Museums—Collections of Incalculable Value—Importance of Numismatics as an Aid to the Study of History—Ancient, Medieval and Modern Coins—The Widow's Mite.



HERE is no more fascinating and advantageous study than that of coins, ancient and modern; to one versed in the science of numismatics there is ever open an exhaustless field for investigation and discovery.

To the young the suggestions of a coin, its origin, the devices and legends upon it, lend a romantic tinge to imagination, and this prompts the study of history and its kindred branches, leading to the acquirement of information such as the routine of schools will never furnish.

As measures are now being taken to change designs upon all coins of the United States, the numismatic knowledge of the metallic currency now in circulation in our country is most important.

The word *numismatics*, from the Latin, *numisma*, a coin, relates not to the actual metal value of any piece, but to its connection with history as illustrated by the image or superscription thereon.

The science of numismatics is, in Europe, considered of such importance and interest that most of the principal cities possess immensely valuable numismatic collections. Paris, London, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Munich, Vienna, Co-

penhagen, Stockholm, Florence, and Madrid all have noted coin museums, the collections being of untold value; and numismatic societies the members of which are the most renowned among the learned men of the earth. The incentive which is given, by cultivation of this taste for study of history, as well as the assistance thereto afforded by it, has been always appreciated by advanced teachers as an invaluable aid to education, and not only in illustrating but also in confirming history, no science has borne a more important part.

Coins are divided by numismatists into three general classes: Ancient, from earliest existence, 700 B. C., to the deposition of Romulus Augustus, A. D. 476.

Medieval (Middle Ages), from the above period to the Reformation, A. D. 1517.

Modern, from the Reformation to the present time.

The medieval and modern are, almost without exception, imitations of the ancient, and the coins of these latter centuries show little or nothing of superiority in our civilized artists over the magnificent coinages of Greece and Rome, struck more than 2,000 years ago.

Every range that mind may take into the far past is furnished with substantial and abundant suggestion, and reliable information by study of the coins of antiquity.

The rulers, male and female; their births, marriages, triumphs, their victories in art, love and war, their deaths are all recorded upon these pieces of metal. Religious sentiments and changes, manners of dress and ceremonial, equipments, weapons, furniture, etc., etc., are plainly delineated upon their coins and medals. Even the character of the individual of whom the piece is commemorative may be closely arrived at. Some place but their plain effigy, or have it in connection with members of their own family; others celebrate their triumphs, and appear proudly crowned with laurels, while still others deify themselves and pose as Jupiter, Hercules and gods of their time.

Mythology largely lends its aid in beautifying these coins and medals, and its fascinations increase the romantic interest which their possession or the knowledge of them through illustration and description excites.

The Bible student finds much to carry his mind back to the very earliest period and subsequent growth of revealed religion in this pursuit, for coins of the Christian type, such as the labrum, or standard bearing the cross, are found from the date of the reign of Constantine onwards, and on one coin of Valerian is seen the celebrated legend, "In hoc signo victor eris."

The Greeks excelled in the beauty and idealism of their coins, and most of the Roman pieces were struck from dies made by Greek artists, and these latter are more valuable, on account of the faithfulness with which they portray individual likenesses, such as Nero, Antonia, the Antonines, Faustina, Marcus, Alexander, and others, and in recording events celebrated historically, as the crowning of Ptolemy Epiphanes by Lepidus, the introduction of elephants into Rome by Metellus, the construction of the Colosseum by Nero and Vespasian, the overthrow of Julia by Tiberius, and all grand changes in the history of the world.

The Roman coinage commenced about 230 or 240 B. C., with the massive copper as, and about 170 B. C. gold and silver coins were issued by various Roman families under permits from the state. An immense number were also struck in the provinces conquered by Rome.

With Julius Caesar commenced the imperial series, which lasted until A. D. 476. After that the right of coining was reserved to itself the right of a striking copper money, which was for a long period marked S. C. (Senatus Consultum).

The word "money" is claimed by many authorities to be derived from the Latin *Moneta*, because the Roman mint stood in the temple of *Juno Moneta*; but though the mint employees here numbered tens of thousands of men engaged in striking coins, yet an immense amount was produced elsewhere.

When we remember that the Romans possessed no banks of deposit and had to secure their accumulated wealth in the cellars and chests, and that the

vast legions of Rome once occupied all the countries in the then known inhabited earth, we can understand how excavations, now continually being made, furnish us with the plentiful supply of original pieces in our possession to-day.

A collection is within the reach of almost any one. Reliable numismatists furnish truly original ancient coins at a low price. Electrotypes are made of the very rare pieces, but these are sold as such, not as veritable coinage.

NUMISMATIC TERMS.—A coin is a piece of metal bearing an impressed device, and designed for circulation as money.

Medals and medallions are large metal pieces struck in dies, on both sides, not for use as money, but to commemorate some event.

A medallion is a small medal, usually, though not always, inferior in beauty or design to a medal.

A token is generally of the size of a current coin of the time and country, issued by a private person or firm.

The obverse of a piece is that side which bears the portrait or principal design indicating the country, nation, or object for which it was struck.

The Reverse, of course, means the opposite side. The Head or Portrait, on a piece is said to face to the right or left, with reference to the observer's right or left hand.

Types are differences in design on coins struck for the same general object and purposes.

Varieties means where the variation in two coins of same value and period is very slight, as in size of letters or distances between them and such trifling variations.

The Field, on a coin or medal, is the open space on the piece not occupied by a device or inscription.

The Legend is any inscription other than the name of the person represented on the piece.

The Inscription means all names, legends, titles, etc., on the coin or medal. It is a general term.

A Mint Mark is a private mark placed on a coin by the mint issuing it, to indicate its genuineness, place of coinage, or other purpose.

The Size of Coins in this country is determined by a scale of sixteenths of an inch; thus, a medal "of size 24," measures 24 sixteenths of an inch in diameter across its face.

A. M. Smith's Authoritative Standard Classification of Coins: Poor coins are those on which the design, lettering or date are almost undecipherable, in the least degree visible.

Fair, are those well worn, but which still show every portion of the design, all letters and entire date.

Very Fair, applies to those on which every mark, letter and figure is well defined, with only the high, fine hair lines

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Reverse: An ethrog. Legend, same as No. 3.

COPPER COIN OF Simon, son of Gioras, under the first revolt of the Jews. Obverse: A cluster of grapes, with the name SIMON above. Reverse: A pithos and palm branch. Legend: SECOND YEAR OF THE DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL.

SILVER COIN OF Simon Bar-Cochab, during the second revolt of the Jews. Obverse: SIMON, around a cluster of grapes. Reverse: Two trumpets. Legend: THE DELIVERANCE OF JERUSALEM. This coin was originally a Denarius of Trajan, which has been re-struck.

THE WIDOW'S MITT.—The illustration here given is an exact copy of the specimen of that coin now in the coin cabinet of the United States Mint in Philadelphia.

Of the Roman money mentioned in the New Testament, its value in present United States standard would be as follows:

Dollars. cts.
A Mite..... 0.0343
A Farthing, about..... 0.0087
A Penny, or Denarius..... 0.1375
A Pound, or Mina..... 13.75

A. M. SMITH,
MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

What Bacteria Are.

The great majority of these microscopic plants are what botanists call bacteria, the smallest form of vegetable life, says Fred D. Chester in *St. Nicholas*. So small are they that it would take, in some cases, as many as fifteen thousand of them arranged in a row to extend an inch. They have different forms, some being round, some oval, some rod-shaped, and others much the shape of a corkscrew, or spiral. In all cases they are so small that one needs a powerful microscope to study them, and in no case can we perceive them singly with the naked eye.

When countless millions of them are grouped together in a mass or colony, we can see them about as we are able to see at a great distance an approaching army, of which we are totally unable to distinguish a single soldier.

We have said that these bacteria move about; and this is true of most of them, although there are some which do not appear to move at all, but remain fixed where they find a good feeding-place. Those that have motion behave in a very peculiar manner; some wobble about in one place without moving forward in the least; others dart hither and thither, back and forth, at an apparently furious rate, rocking and twirling about, and turning a hundred somersaults as they move along.

Bacteria multiply very rapidly, and they do this in a strange way. A single one breaks itself in two; then each half grows to be as large as the first. Then these, in turn, divide up again, and so on, until from a single one we have many thousands in a short time.

To give you the figures, such as they are, a single one can multiply at so enormous a rate that in forty-eight hours it can produce something like 250,000,000,000 of bacteria. Great consequences follow this enormous increase of bacteria, for while one so small in itself can do little, the army resulting from the multiplication of one is able to accomplish much.

The Last Resort.

Farmer Acorn—"I don't see what we've got to do, Mirander. The garden crops is all rotted by the rain, the fruit is all spoiled by the frost, the well water ain't fit to drink any more, and every cow we've got has gone dry—won't have a drop o' milk for three months."

Churchill Helpmate—"Never mind, Joshua, we'll get along. I'll take some boards."—*New York Herald.*

A URINE that has been after two

dured is tough.

Two foot rule—Stand on your own pins.

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COINS OF THE BIBLE.

The Jewish people possessed no positive coinage until the time of their subjection to the kings of Syria, of the Seleucid dynasty, about B. C. 312, when Greek currency, established throughout the East since the Macedonian conquest, circulated also in Judea, until the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, in B. C. 176, caused the revolt of Mattathias, the chief priest, when his son Judas Maccabees headed the revolt, eventually re-established the long-lost independence of Judea, and to his successor, Simon, was conceded by Antiochus, the son of Demetrius, the right of coining national money, the earliest of which was issued about B. C. 144, in pieces of one, two, and four silver shekels, bearing different types, but all relating to the ceremonial of Judaic worship.

Of the illustrations:

No. 1 is a SHEKEL of Simon Maccabees. Obverse: A cup or chalice. Legend: SHEKEL OF ISRAEL. Year II. Reverse: A triple lily. Legend: JERUSALEM THE HOLY. Time, B. C. 144.

2. HALF-SHEKEL: Same date and similar to No. 1 except in denomination.

3. A SIXTH-SHEKEL: Copper. Same date. Obverse: A cup or chalice. Legend: THE REDEMPTION OF ZION. Reverse: A bundle of branches between two ethrogs. Legend: IN THE FOURTH YEAR.

4. COPPER coin: Same date. Obverse: Two bunches of thickly leaved branches. Legend: IN THE FOURTH YEAR—ONE HALF. Reverse: Palm tree between two baskets of dates. Legend: THE REDEMPTION OF ZION.

5. COPPER COIN, same date. Obverse: Legend, SIMON, PRINCE OF ISRAEL, on either side of a palm tree. Reverse: A vine-leaf surrounded by the Legend: FIRST YEAR OF THE REDEMPTION OF ISRAEL.

6. COPPER COIN. Same date. Obverse: Two bunches of branches. Legend: IN THE FOURTH YEAR—ONE QUARTER.

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MISS DE PRIDE—I wouldn't marry him if he were the last man on earth. Rival belle—Indeed, you wouldn't. I'd take him myself then.

MAMMA—Now, don't you want to be good, Johnny, and go to heaven some day? Johnny (doubtfully)—Yes'm; but I'd rather go to the circus first.

"GOING camping out this year?" "No; I camped out last year." "Why don't you camp out this year?" "I just told you. I camped out last year."

JOHNNY's mother writes: "Do you think it best to let a boy learn to whistle?" Certainly; some day you may want him to hulk the strawberries.

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STRANDED: "Yes, the yacht was completely wrecked; but the captain saved himself by clinging to the bight of a rope." "H'm! His bark appears to have been worse than his bight."

SMARTFELLOW (anxious to poke fun at an old maid)—Let me see. It's a long time since we last met, is it not, Miss Antique? Miss Antique—A very long time. How well that suit of clothes has hung together?

YOUNG husband—My dear, some of my garments are sadly in need of buttons. Young wife—Yes, my love, I noticed that, and have sent for my mother. She is a splendid hand at sewing on buttons.

FLORIST (to committee)—You want an appropriate floral design, do you? What was the decedent's business? Spokesman—He was an attorney. Florist—How would something in the shape of a lyre strike you?

"Ah, I see you have your son with you in business. This must make it very pleasant for you." "Yes, it does. There is nothing like it. He can take a few days off at any time, and the business runs right along, as usual."

FARMER's son—Pa, I'm convinced that my mission in life is to save souls, and with your permission I'll begin the work at once. Old farmer—Well, if you've concluded to learn a trade, go ahead. I suppose a sole business is as good as any!

"GO WHERE there is the most sin, sir," said the old clergyman's coachman, when asked which of two calls the dominie ought to accept. The good man thought over it, and concluded that where there was most money there would be the most sin. So he accepted the call which offered the most substantial salary.

THE SENTIMENTAL LOVER AND THE PRAGMATIC MAIDEN.

Come, let us walk, love, through the moon, Which brightly beams on high, Enjoy the balmy breath of June, And list the zephyr's sigh.

I would not walk beneath the moon, However bright her beam; I'd rather go to a saloon And eat a dish of cream.

Impressions of President Lincoln.

Gen. Henry G. Thomas, U. S. A., in a speech, recently delivered in Portland, Maine, thus gives his impression of President Lincoln on his visit during the war to the Army of the James.

At 10 a. m. the President appeared, Gen. Weitzel riding on his left. I had command of the First Division, Twenty-fifth Corps, that day, and the first to be reviewed, and as the President halted to receive the salute his eyes lighted for the first time on that uniformed mass of freedmen, and his rugged face was illumined by a smile the like of which for benignity I have never seen.

President Lincoln, as we know, was one of those who "saw visions and dreamed dreams," and I have always believed, such was the light of his countenance, that he had a prophetic vision that very day that all his love and labor for the slave was not to be in vain. He managed his horse well, and sat with ease upon him, but rode loosely, carelessly, letting his legs sway and his arms flop up and down. He had evidently ridden a good deal and never given thought as to how he rode or looked. His wonderful appearance of length struck me very forcibly. He was only two and a-half inches taller than Gen. Weitzel, who was thin even to meagerness, and yet Weitzel looked actually stubby in comparison.

Add to this loose way of riding that his tall hat had settled down behind almost on to his neck, and showed his forehead and a tuft of hair like a zouave, and that his trousers had worked up nearly to the tops of his stockings and that he wore low-cut shoes, and you can appreciate Capt. Bob Lincoln's remark after the ceremony was through, as his father approached a group of which Admiral Porter was the center. It was, "Well, father doesn't seem to handsome much, does he?"

Not Related.

Thus the Louisville Courier-Journal answers an inquiring subscriber: The supposition among newspaper proofreaders that Miss Susan B. Anthony is a sister of the late Mark Anthony, of Rome, has led to a frequent error in spelling the name of the Roman leader. While Miss Anthony's name is always spelled with an h, her supposed brother used no h's whatever. At least, none can be found in his name on any of the hotel registers of his day. The h in Miss Anthony's name may be merely a bit of feminine affectation. Mark Anthony's name should no more be spelled with an h than Napoleon's should appear with a p.

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